

REMARKS

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of this application in view of the foregoing amendment and following remarks.

Status of the Claims

Claims 1 and 3-8 are pending in this application. Claim 1 is independent. All of the pending claims stand rejected. By this amendment, claim 1 is amended. New claim 9 is added. No new matter has been added by this amendment.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §§102 and 103

Claims 1, 3-5, 7 and 8 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as allegedly being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,771,315 to Nanjo et al. ("Nanjo1"). Claim 6 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Nanjo1 in view of JP 11-064923 to Nanjo Yusuke ("Nanjo2"). Nanjo2 is cited as disclosing that an ND filter is made such that its shape is similar to the V shape of the opening portion of a diaphragm blade.

In the *Response to Arguments* section of the Office Action, the Examiner indicates, *inter alia*, that "the moving speed of the optical filter from point S' to T as shown in Fig. 11 is higher than the moving speed of the two diaphragm blades because the slope of the displacement of the optical filter in this period is larger than the slope of the displacement of the diaphragm blades ... the moving speed of the diaphragm blades is substantially zero in the period from point S to S' shown in Fig. 11 while the moving speed of the optical filter is much faster in this period since the claims does not require the entire period of exposure control." [pages 2 and 3 of the Office Action]

Applicant notes that Fig. 11 of Nanjo1 is a graph showing the relationship between a rotational angle of the rotating plate 31 and respective strokes through which the diaphragm

blades 2A, 3A and the ND filter holding member 5A are moved. However, having no clear definition of the term "strokes" in Nanjo1, it is not clear whether the vertical axis of Fig. 11 represents a relative distance that the ND filter and diaphragm blades move.

Nonetheless, claim 1 has been amended for further clarification. In particular, amended claim 1 recites, *inter alia*, "wherein a moving speed of the optical filter to the opening is higher than a moving speed of the at least two light-blocking members throughout entire period of control operation."

Support for the amendment may be found throughout the original specification including paragraphs [0128] through [0130] of the corresponding published application (i.e., 2005/0073604). A portion of the specification (i.e., paragraph [0128]) describes that "...since the diaphragm drive lever 93 for driving the diaphragm blades 95 and 96 pushes the proximal end side of the ND drive lever 99, the moving speed of the ND blade 98 is higher than the moving speed of the diaphragm blades 95 and 96."

As Applicant understands it, neither Nanjo1 nor Nanjo2 shows or suggests the above explained aspect of invention as specifically recited in amended claim 1. For example, as pointed out by the Examiner, the relative speed of the ND filter is not always higher than the speed of the diaphragm blade throughout entire period of control operation (e.g., A through T) as shown in Fig. 11 of Nanjo1.

Accordingly, amended claim 1 is believed neither anticipated by nor rendered obvious in view of the cited references (i.e., Nanjo1 and Nanjo2), either taken alone or in combination, for at least the reasons discussed above.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) is respectfully requested.

Applicant has not individually addressed the rejections of the dependent claims (i.e., claims 3-8) because Applicant submits that the independent claims from which they respectively depend are in condition for allowance as set forth above. Applicant however reserves the right to address such rejections of the dependent claims should such be necessary.

New Claim

Claim 9 has been added to recite the claimed invention in an alternative manner. New claim 9 is directed to a light-quantity adjusting apparatus and recites, *inter alia*, "wherein the drive mechanism has an operation range in which a displacement amount of the optical filter with respect to the opening is made larger than a displacement amount of the light-blocking members with respect to the opening, while the actuator operates by a predetermined amount, and wherein the drive mechanism starts drive of the optical filter in a direction in which the optical filter is inserted into the region opposed to the light-passing aperture when the area of the light-passing aperture decreased to a predetermined area by the movement of the light-blocking members." Support for new claim 9 may be found, e.g., at the Embodiment 4 including paragraph [0121] and Fig. 14 of the specification as originally file.

Nanjol discloses that, as shown in Figs. 9 to 11, the rotating plate 31 is driven by the motor 30, and the diaphragm blades 2A, 3A are thereby driven to change the size of the diaphragm aperture, and the ND filter holding member 5A is also driven with respect to the diaphragm aperture. The drive of the ND filter holding member 5A with respect to the diaphragm aperture is started when the drive of the diaphragm blades 2A, 3A from a full-open aperture position is started, as shown in Fig. 11.

In contrast, in claim 9, the drive mechanism starts drive of the optical filter in a direction in which the optical filter is inserted into the region opposed to the light-passing

aperture when the area of the light-passing aperture decreased to a predetermined area by the movement of the light-blocking members, which is not disclosed or taught by Nanjo1.

Applicant believes that the application as amended including the new claim is in condition for allowance and such action is respectfully requested.

AUTHORIZATION

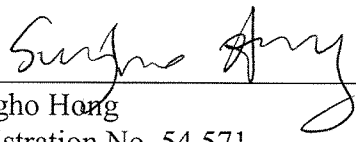
No petitions or additional fees are believed due for this amendment and/or any accompanying submissions. However, to the extent that any additional fees and/or petition is required, including a petition for extension of time, Applicant hereby petitions the Commissioner to grant such petition, and hereby authorizes the Commissioner to charge any additional fees, including any fees which may be required for such petition, or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 13-4500 (Order No. 1232-5175). A DUPLICATE COPY OF THIS SHEET IS ENCLOSED.

An early and favorable examination on the merits is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,
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